

MuT:
Connecting
people, ideas
and worlds to build a
useful Museology
Sancho Querol, Lorena; Sancho, Emanuel (2015)

PULL-OFF | SEPARATA

Resilient Territories



*Innovation and Creativity for
New Modes of Regional Development*

Edited by
Hugo Pinto

Resilient Territories

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Innovation and Creativity for New Modes of Regional Development

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January 2015

Hugo Pinto

INTRODUCTION

RESILIENT TERRITORIES

RON BOSCHMA AND HUGO PINTO

Today, Europe is in a delicate situation. Contrasts of growing competition and the lack of capacity to overcome challenges from the recent economic turbulence in specific regions and countries have created a sense of urgency to reflect on member-states' cohesion. Questions arise regarding the diverse regional economies that compose the European Union (EU) and what this diversity means for adaptation to external shocks, resistance to negative impacts and evolution to new socio-technical regimes. Essentially, academics, planners and decision makers are looking for a way to increase the resilience of the EU territory. Resilience can be understood as a non-equilibrium characteristic that facilitates a socioeconomic system to recover from a negative impact by reshaping a former trajectory or by adapting a new trajectory that successfully deals with the external pressures. These processes and characteristics have been studied in the recent past by regional scientists seeking to identify the set of dynamic conditions that create a more or less resilient territory.

In the regional context, resilience is a concept adapted from the study of ecological systems and other fields of science that is applied to the understanding of geographically embedded socioeconomic systems. It is often a characteristic connected to a threshold of socioeconomic variety and specialisation that facilitates a smooth adaptation to the challenges faced in territories. With the recent crisis, some regions have dealt with this concept, by planning the adequate conditions for resilience. Regional resilience has also been connected, but not fully integrated in the literature, with more stabilised concepts, such as innovation and creativity (Pinto & Pereira, 2014).

Innovation is often assumed as crucial for resilience. It was a central notion for the EU's policies in the last decade and it was also very influential in science and technology (S&T) studies. In particular, innovation

systems have been used as a framework to develop and implement policies in transnational, national, regional, local, and even sectoral contexts (OECD, 2005). An innovation system focuses on a specific area or sector, where a group of actors is interconnected, with the goal to innovate. The core of the system has the main function of innovation but also has a broader ambition for growth and development. Hence, when analysing the innovation system it is important to understand actors and linkages that are directly connected to S&T infrastructure but also the institutional architecture and a vast group of building blocks that are in the centre of the socio-economic profile of the territory, providing the range of possibilities for adaptation and evolution.

In parallel, contributions for the role of creativity in regional resilience have increased since Richard Florida's best-selling book 'The Rise of the Creative Class' gained media and city planners' attention (Florida, 2002). The 'creative class thesis' argues that the basis for territorial advantage is talent, and that to enhance economic growth, places should develop, attract and retain creative people who can stimulate knowledge, technology and innovation, and thus, resilience. Creative people can be defined as a new, emerging collective, the creative class. Fundamental to talent attraction and retention is the quality of place, combining factors such as openness, diversity, street culture and environmental quality. Creative class members prefer places that are tolerant, diverse and open to new ideas. The place should provide an eco-system in which diverse forms of creativity can root and flourish. The existence of culture and leisure that support particular lifestyles provides incentives for the location of people who like this quotidian. These factors, more or less intangible, structure institutions and an environment of 'cosmopolitanism' that influences the locational decisions of talent.

In this introduction, we will first provide a tentative framework for the notion of regional resilience by underlining that history, industrial variety, knowledge networks and institutions matter in this capacity. Second, we will provide a brief presentation of this book and its organisation.

Regional Resilience: an Evolutionary Framework

Regional resilience is a notion that has obtained a great deal of attention in the context of the economic crisis. In evolutionary economic geography, it is common to refute the equilibrium engineering-based concept of resilience, in which resilience is simply the response to external shocks and a movement towards a previous steady state. Instead, the focus is on the long-term capacity of territories to reconfigure their socio-

economic structures and to develop new growth paths (e.g. Christopherson, Michie, & Tyler, 2010; Cooke, Parrilli, & Curbelo, 2012; Simmie & Martin, 2010). However, there is still little understanding of the long-term adaptive capacity of territories (Martin, 2012), and as such, an evolutionary notion of regional resilience is still under construction (Boschma, 2014).

An evolutionary regional resilience concept abandons an equilibrium framework. Resilience is not only about short-term buffers, which prevent a territory to collapse. Territorial resilience should explicitly be about structural change and long-term economic renewal, as this is the way for territories to offset economic decline. It is therefore misleading to analyse territorial resilience merely as a mechanical response to shocks, without discussing it, let alone without analysing the main determinants of what makes a territory competitive. What sense does it make to talk about the resilience of the Greek economy without a fundamental analysis of how the Greek economy can improve its competitiveness? If we had understood that well, discussions about the future of the Greek economy would not have been narrowed down to austerity measures, and to how long it would take for the Greeks to pay back their debt. Instead, we would have had more fruitful discussions on how to improve the innovativeness of the Greek economy (to stimulate tourism, for instance, or to diversify into new activities), and what structural measures had to be taken to make that happen.

We have to understand how history matters for regional resilience. History should be an integral part of an evolutionary notion of territorial resilience (see Boschma, 2014). Resilience in terms of the capacity of a region to develop new growth paths does not imply a movement away from former territorial trajectories, as if new growth pathways are disconnected from their past, and as if territories require a divergence from their history to achieve success. Our understanding is that history is central to comprehend the development of new growth pathways, as the past not only defines constraints (not any new path is feasible) but also provides opportunities to move into new economic and technological domains. Boschma (2014) proposed an evolutionary notion of territorial resilience in terms of how a shock affects the long-term determinants of regional competitiveness. In particular, Boschma (2014) focuses on how the shock affects the capacity of a territory to develop new growth paths. He distinguishes between three determinants of territorial resilience: industrial, knowledge networks and institutional structures in territories. These capture different dimensions of resilience in an integrative manner, which had been treated independently in the literature so far. Below, we briefly

discuss the three dimensions of territorial resilience proposed by Boschma (2014).

The industrial composition of territories matters for resilience. Specialised regions are less vulnerable to sector-specific shocks, but once hit, they have more damaging effects on the regional economy as a whole. Moreover, these regions are more likely to be dominated by powerful interests that may frustrate the development of new growth pathways. These territories also have a limited number of local options available to recombine different knowledge areas and to diversify related activities. To be resilient, specialised regions need to link to and activate casual redundancies (such as skills) in the territory, use their specialised knowledge base to diversify related activities, and connect to other territories from which new resources can be integrated in the local knowledge base. Diversified regions have a higher chance to be susceptible to sector-specific shocks, as they house many industries that might be potentially hit. And once hit, whether such territories are resilient or not, will depend on the extent to which local industries are economically integrated and skill-related. When their industries are more disconnected in terms of input-output relationships, and more skill-related, it improves their ability to absorb that part of the labour force that has become redundant because of the shock (Diodato & Weterings, 2012). Diversified regions also have more capacity to recombine a range of local industries (unrelated variety) and generate new growth pathways as a result. On top of that, these territories have a higher likelihood to benefit from overlapping areas between related industries: higher related variety implies a larger number of learning and recombinatory opportunities for local industries (Neffke et al., 2011). As a consequence, diversified regions are more resilient when they have a combination of unrelated variety and related variety, which guarantees that there is both focus within one knowledge domain, and variety between knowledge domains.

Knowledge networks also affect regional resilience. Regional networks can be excessively inward-looking and actors in such a network too proximate, in particular in over-specialised regions. These networks will suffer from limited recombination possibilities and a high proportion of closely tied core actors. This also makes the network more vulnerable to shocks by preventing lock-outs. Resilient territories have knowledge networks that connect with more peripheral actors, preferably in related activities, or by rearranging their local knowledge networks to achieve the adequate levels of proximity between organisations, such as loosely coupled networks (Boschma & Frenken, 2010; Balland et al., 2013). In other situations, local knowledge networks may be very fragmented with

an excessive number of actors with few linkages between them. These local networks provide opportunities to accommodate shocks and to get access to new and non-redundant information, but there is no regional cohesiveness. In addition, there is a low rate of efficiency and control of collective behaviour within the network. Resilient territories are expected to have a core/periphery network structure with an adequate balance between embedded relationships and strategic ‘structural holes’ linkages, as proposed by Fleming, King & Juda (2007).

Institutional structures may also be directly linked to territorial resilience. Territories may be hostages of institutional lock-in, when the institutional architecture is mainly focused on the specific needs of very dominant local industries. This problem is reinforced when the local political elite is part of this tight and rigid institutional constellation (Hassink, 2010). Such territories are expected to suffer from institutional inertia in which institutions are non-responsive to new growth pathways and cannot adapt to accommodate the growth of new trajectories. This may be overcome by institutional plasticity (Strambach, 2008), in which new institutions emerge without directly challenging the overall institutional framework. In diversified regions, it is unlikely that powerful actors can completely dominate and take over the design of regional institutions. Diversified regions have a more developed capacity for institutional change but they also lack cohesiveness with too many interests that may harm local commitment and control. Instead, resilient territories are expected to be open, with a decentralised institutional framework that responds to and accepts newcomers, but in parallel is also supportive and responsive to the needs of particular industries. Territories with a certain degree of institutional overlap between local industries are more capable of developing new growth paths, as new institution-building is less likely to be opposed by local institutional players, and existing institutions may even be put to effective use in this respect (Boschma, 2014).

Organisation of the Book

The book ‘Resilient Territories: Innovation and Creativity for New Modes of Regional Development’ intends to contribute to the definition and advance the scientific agenda of topics such as: regional resilience, innovation and creativity. The stabilisation of this research agenda and the informed discussion about different conceptualisations of regional resilience is crucial for the alignment and engagement of the scientific community in the study of these crucial topics. The book is also focused

on informing policy and decision-makers, in different levels of action, about the advancements of conceptualisation in these domains. This may have a significant impact on the process of planning and designing new policy measures and instruments, specifically for the implementation of Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) that can help the construction of more resilient territories in Europe.

The book is organised in three main parts:

‘Part I – Innovation’ collects six chapters that discuss the connections of innovation with regional resilience. These chapters are based on traditional approaches to innovation in Regional Science. The first chapter “The role of social capital in resilient territories: mechanisms for growth” by Sisti, Parrilli and Zubiaurre, underlines the importance of social capital in the evolution of localised patterns of economic activities and in the growth dynamics, using the cluster concept as a framework, and providing empirical evidence with the study of several regions. The second chapter “Which factors foster resilience? Does innovation matter? Evidence from European Figures” by Fernandes provides a summary of recent research on the linkages of innovation and resilience, giving emphasis to firms and to the national innovation systems’ response to the recent economic crisis. In the third chapter “Knowledge transfer in Regional Innovation Systems: The effects of socio-economic structure”, Fernández-Esquinas and Pérez-Yruela structure a framework to understand the influences of regional socioeconomics in the knowledge transfer process, understood as the systemic connections between knowledge producers, in particular universities and public research organisations, and the knowledge users, specifically the firms. Chapter 4 “The effects of variety in regional resilience: Evidence from French metropolitan regions” by Elli explores the effects of different types of variety in regional resilience showing that simplistic visions of the positive impacts of related variety in economic dynamics requires additional discussion. In Chapter 5 “Human capital and regional economy: a preliminary approach of the Portuguese case” Almeida and Nogueira present the fundamental concepts of intellectual capital as constituted by human capital, structural capital and relational capital, and an empirical example using the Portuguese case. Chapter 6 “Financing and business innovation processes” presents empirical evidence of firms’ innovative behaviour, relevant barriers and their relation to policy instruments, using information from the Spanish region of Extremadura.

‘Part II – Creativity’ collects five chapters focusing on the relevance of culture in creative dynamics, providing insights about the impacts of this domain in regional resilience. Chapter 7 “Creative dynamics, local identities and innovative milieus: re-focusing regional development

policies?” by Costa debates the recent attention given to cultural and creative industries presenting the tensions that emerge with this policy-agenda, illustrating critical factors for the sustainability and resilience of the creative territorial systems. Comunian and Jacobi present in Chapter 7 “Resilience, creative careers and creative spaces: Bridging vulnerable artist’s livelihood and adaptive urban change” an exercise to adapt the resilience framework to cultural and creative industries, through the interaction of the micro-level individual resilience of creative careers and macro-level creative urban struggles. Chapter 9 “Tracing limits – Public and private in the cartography of contemporary cities: the dialogue boxes on Street Windows Project” by Tavares debates the public art and space organisation in urban contexts using case studies from several interesting initiatives. In Chapter 10 “Creativity and culture for territorial innovation” Sedini, Vignati and Zurlo present the CCAIps project, intended to promote creative companies in the Alpine Space in Italy. Chapter 11 “MuT: Connecting people, ideas and worlds to build a useful museology” by Querol and Sancho highlights the relevance of social museology and its impact in local dynamics using the case study of the Costume Museum of São Brás do Alportel (Portugal).

‘Part III – New Modes for Regional Development’ presents four chapters that incorporate explicit policy visions that take into account innovation, creativity, smart specialisation and regional resilience. Chapter 12 “Governance and sustainable development: building capacity for resilience in cities” by Bravo and Manso discussed the notion of resilience, systematising several theoretical contributions and policy documents, linking that debate with the governance of urban areas. Romão and Ikegani present in Chapter 13 “Knowledge, place and economic performance: Smart specialisation and the Triple Helix framework in Amsterdam and Sapporo” a comparative study between a region in Netherlands and another in Japan identifying key factors for the implementation of smart specialisation in regional innovation strategies. Chapter 14 “The Regional Innovation Strategy in the Czech Republic and SMEs: Evidence from Moravia” by Jurčík presents the case study of the development of a smart specialisation strategy in a region of the Czech Republic. The book concludes with the Chapter 15 “Implementing Doing-Using-Interacting regional innovation policies: Smart specialisation in a tourism based region”. In this chapter, Pinto, Cruz and Cooke argue that Science-Technology-Innovation (STI) policy approaches might be complemented in less technology-intensive regions by a Doing-Using-Interacting (DUI) approach. Emphasis is given to the Algarve (Portugal), a region where the

implementation of a smart specialisation policy model based on DUI can contribute to unlock its over-specialisation in ‘sun and sand’ tourism.

This book combines a variety of chapters, theoretical essays and empirical studies. Hopefully it will contribute to the ongoing debate about the integration of regional resilience, innovation, and creativity, the conditions for the consolidation of resilient territories, the impacts of talent and human capital in regional development, the articulation of related variety and regional resilience, and the implementation of smart specialisation policies.

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Book Title:

Resilient territories: Innovation and creativity for new modes of regional development

Part II: Creativity

Chapter XI: "MuT: Connecting people, ideas and worlds to build a useful Museology"¹

Abstract

The words Museology and Museum entail different textures, nuances and senses when understood through the perspective of a committed Museology with a sustainable development. "A Museology of inclusive nature" or a Social Museology emerges, whose participatory practices can be translated into the recognition of other agents, other heritages, other aspects of local culture.

This article depicts the experience of a museum in the Algarve (Portugal) committed to this cause: the *Costume Museum of São Brás de Alportel* (MuT). Its management model, marked by the search for sustainability, by the freedom of action and the sharing resulting from the recognition and definition of new uses of local knowledge and experiences, is based on the existence of "action layers" that allow us to reposition Museology and Museum at the wake of the construction of an alternative globalization.

Keywords: Social Museology, museum in "layers", sustainability, empowerment, utopia.

1. This work is an improved and enhanced version of the Portuguese article "Sujeitos do património: os novos horizontes da Museologia Social em São Brás de Alportel", published at N° 21 of e-cadernos CES, a peer-reviewed online journal published by the *Centre for Social Studies* of the University of Coimbra (more information at: <http://eces.revues.org/1735>). This chapter also draws on research from the post-doctoral project of the first author "Society in the Museum: study on cultural participation in European local museums" (SoMus), co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Operational Programme of Human Potential, and by national funds through Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), in the context of the Post-Doctoral Grant with the reference SFRH/BPD/95214/2013.

1. Introduction

For some time now, the idea of constructing a text on the management model that is being developed at the *Costume Museum of São Brás de Alportel* (MuT) has been in our mind. The desire to write emerged through dialogue and shared experiences, as daily paths towards the construction of the museum (Delgado, 2009).

Taking as a starting point the challenges related to the construction of a development model where social and cultural creativity constitutes a structuring pillar of the process, an analysis of the place and role of the (local) Museum and (Social) Museology is performed through an inspiring case.

Our goal is to systematize the way in which Social Museology MuT has built in recent years, because we find in it a set of experiences that translate into the valorization of local culture, in the exercise of a plural and evolutionary heritagisation, and in the identification and reuse of processes, senses and knowledges that give life to our cultural diversity.

The work we present here is the result of a reflection around some issues that seems essentials to weave a Museology of otherness (Mayrand, 2009).

2. Social Museology and the local cause as museum semantics

From the heart of our theme, and taking into account that the kind of Museology practiced at MuT tends to be a reply to the profound exchange of paradigm that has been taking place in the fields of social science in the recent decades (Fraser, 2000; Bourdieu, 2001; Santos, 2009), it seems interesting to take a step back into the 1970s and to situate our study in the evolution and the crossing of three key concepts for museums in the 21st Century: Heritage, Museology and Development.

In effect, two UNESCO documents approved during that decade, would place the bases of the compromises associated with these concepts. The first formed the product of the first huge convention on cultural heritage and privileged what we now consider a monumental and elitist notion of heritage (*UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, 1972). The second, known as *Santiago Declaration* (ICOM, 1972) and created by the museological section of this very entity, reflects the spirit of new social causes that play a central role on both sides of the Atlantic, pushing forth the debate begun with the *UNESCO Regional Seminar on the Role of Education in Museums* (ICOM, 1958) and recognizing its social function as based on the concept of the “integral museum”. In this document, ICOM lays its premises on a participatory Museology, capable of recognizing the museum as a dynamic instrument of social change, based on interdisciplinary work and the recognition of the museologist as a socio-political being (Cândido, 2003).

Following on from this, we can then state that the 1970s witnessed the birth of sociocultural practice as playing a fundamental role in the museological process, as a means to integral development. Within this framework we are able to identify new ideologies based on a participative democracy which was gaining visibility, and also the recognition of social capital as an axis of cohesion and development.

With the dawning of a new decade, the current debate and the natural evolution of those trends, delineated at Santiago, would result in the emergence of a new museological tendency which

under the title of New Museology (*Quebec Declaration*, 1984), proposes a renewal of principles and methodologies in this field of social science (Lorente, 2012; Sancho Querol, 2013). New forms of Museology (ecomuseums, school museums, community based, neighbourhood, urban...) had begun to spread throughout Europe and the Americas.

Strengthened by the creation of an *International Movement for a New Museology*, in 1985 (<http://www.minom-icom.net/about-us> 19.08.2013), this current of thought structured its performance on a conceptual triad where Community, Territory and Heritage formed the base of a Social Museology (Fernández, 2003; Bruno, 2010).

During that same period, the third of our concepts would finally come into being. Within a context drawn out from a (still) shy and early form of globalization, closely related to a growing environmental conscience, the report from the *United Nations Worldwide Commission for the Environment and Development*, "Our Common Future" which is best known as the "Brundtland Report" (UN, 1987) appears. Providing a critical vision of the development model, which had been adopted up till then by developed and developing nations, Brundtland defined the concept of Sustainable Growth, highlighting the risk of excessive use of natural resources without considering the capacity and support of ecosystems in the present, and consequently unsustainability for future generations.

Following this initial alert, and as a result of the first *United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development* (UN, 1992), the *Rio 92 Declaration* and, above all, the *Agenda 21*, were crucial documents in pushing forth a reformulation of the development models which had been in force until then. In these documents, a strong relation between global environmental protection, its economic branching and social development could be figured out.

In this sense, and as a result of this ongoing international debate and of the work of activists such as John Elkington, in the 90s we witnessed the rise of the "Model of Sustainability of Three Pillars" or "*Triple bottom line*" (Elkington, 1998) to answer those challenges posed by organizations such as the United Nations.

Structured according to three key dimensions: Social (justice), Economic (prosperity) and Environmental (quality) (<http://www.sustainability.com/history>, 12.09.2013), this concept of sustainability revealed interesting similarities with another concept that had previously been established in Santiago, do Chile. The main challenge was then to build an enhanced model, resulting from the intersection of these two premises and able to put the Museum right at the center.

Despite developing from different contexts, and keeping in mind that New Museology emerged associated to socio-cultural development, the concepts were moving closer together in rationale making it possible to establish an interesting parallel between them. Indeed, due to its nature and commitments, the Social Dimension of the concept of Sustainability could be equaled to the concept of Community in New Museology, as can the Environmental Dimension be set equal to Territory. Nonetheless, in comparing the third dimension of Sustainability (the Economic) with the third working axis of New Museology (Heritage) the process seemed to lose its natural linearity.

Within this framework of thought and reflection, we now realize that the discrepancies between the Economic Dimension and Heritage in fact revealed two great absences, which would only appear in the 21st Century. The New Museology Heritage did bring the challenges related with that which is today the fourth pillar of sustainable development: Culture (Hawkes, 2001; UN, 2012). At the same time, the Economic Dimension of Development introduced the challenges

concerning the place a Museum could also have on the economic sustainability of the environment in which it operates and, consequently, on Museum theory itself.

Henceforth, the steps taken would be marked by the progressive awareness of these absences, giving rise to the definition of specific measures that could minimize the effects. As a result, Heritage Studies welcomed the humanization of heritage, expressed through the process of broadening the concept.

This process would lead to a reformulation of the concept of cultural heritage, expressed at the international level with the inclusion of popular culture (UNESCO, 1989), the creation of the Intangible Heritage section of UNESCO (1993), the policies of protections and valorisation of cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2001) and the recognition of the intangible dimension of cultures (UNESCO, 2003). Within this process and located at the center of the debate, is the need to safeguard the knowledge and traditions in process of disappearance.

These thoughts make us today confront the challenge where the valorization of local (by someone's referred as glocalization) intermingles with the preservation of the living culture. At stake is a whole collective bargaining of local cultural processes, which translates, among other things, in the construction of contemporary identities (Gonçalves, 2007; Alivizatou, 2012).

Simultaneously, since the decade of the 90s, New Museology initiated a process of approximation to other disciplines of the social sciences, which would end in the regeneration of the museological current under the name of Social Museology or Sociomuseology. From this moment the discipline is in direct relation to sustainable development through the Museum, with the participation of communities in the definition, together with the management and socialization of cultural and natural artifacts; i.e. focusing this Sociomuseology science practice on the concept of museum as a collective project.

Well into the second decade of the 21st century, and facing such great changes as those we are now crossing, the need and pertinence to reposition museums and Museology at the heart of our society becomes evident. With this in mind, and conscious of the role the museum holds in the process of development, where culture rests as one of the main axes of practice (ICOM, 2013a), ICOM reminds us of the potential of the museum, and of heritage as positive engines of development rather than simple sources of expenditure, as they have been seen till now (ICOM, 2013b).

In this context Sociomuseology, carrying forward its challenges, understands today the Museum as a political, poetic and pedagogical process in permanent construction (MINOM, 2013), which develops from a deep and broad concept of participation (Moutinho, 2010). It encompasses the four axes which integrate this development model, in order to locate the Museum in an interdisciplinary framework, in the center of the system.

Microcosm and local laboratory of an evolving society, the Museum, by its ability to mobilize, can contribute to the appreciation and (re)use of natural resources (the result of a constructive relationship with the territory and the environment) and cultural resources (by repositioning the values of culture and heritage in local everyday life), the construction of a social justice (from a self concept of community as the driving structure) and of an equitable economy (which involves the challenge of building new forms of local harmony, from the biocentric model) (Acosta, 2013).

Under the optic of Sociomuseology, museums must understand that it's great heritage are people (Chagas, 2013) thus contributing to the construction of an alternative globalization. Let's take the case of MuT.

3. At a village in the Algarve interior

The *Costume Museum of São Brás de Alportel* was born in 1983 when its founder, Father José da Cunha Duarte, decided to organize an exhibition of ethnographic objects in the Fire Department of São Brás de Alportel.

With the help of the local *Parish Social and Cultural Centre*, a more thorough process of ethnographic collecting was started from which, in due time the idea of constructing a museum with this thematic focus was born. The objective was to research and to provide information on local artifacts.

It was in 1987 when the museum took form. Stimulated both by the interest shown in local assets, but also by the mission of social support and local development, the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia of São Brás de Alportel*² (SCM), decided to get involved in the project, accepting request of Father José to look after the existing collection.

The SCM, embarked on this mission with the local ethnography in mind, and while benefiting from the donation of a 19th Century property, and located in the village centre, created a new place of interest, focussing on matters that the priest had brought to the attention of the village: the *António Bentes Cultural Centre*³.

In the hands of the *Misericórdia*, the house would become the *Ethnographic Museum of Algarve Costume* and fully operational around 1990. The idea was to have its own building with one appointed employee, a small group of volunteer collaborators and a corpus of intentions that foresaw the existence of revenues and the freedom to produce its own cultural agenda.⁴

It is worth mentioning that, if on the one hand, the centennial principles of the SCM were based on the social needs as priorities in its field of action, and cultural heritage was placed on a secondary level, on the other hand, its solidity provided a stable environment which favored the implementation of long term projects. These projects were based on the practice of concepts such as “cause, social conscience and citizenship”, and today also applied to ecology, the preservation of cultural heritage or integrated development (Sancho, 2006).

These were the first years of existence of the Cultural Centre and of its Museum from 1987 onwards. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the poor state the building was in, would lead to continual thorough renovation works that took place between 1993 and 2003. Meanwhile, the existing collection was beginning to gain visibility for its ethnographic and heritage value. In this highly demanding field of textile heritage, the lack of organization and of inventory, as well as the deficient conditions of preservation in which most of the assets were found required the training of a small team. This formation relied on the specialized support of the *National Costume Museum*.

2. The *Santa Casa da Misericórdia of São Brás de Alportel*, is the local branch of a nationwide organization of the same name, which focuses on social and charitable work of different types.

3. See “Protocol signed between the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia of São Brás de Alportel* and the *Parish Social and Cultural Centre of São Brás de Alportel*” (1987) in: www.museu-sbras.com/docs-protocolo1987.pdf and the updated document in 1992 at: www.museu-sbras.com/docs-protocolo1992.pdf

4. See “Rules and guidelines” at: www.museu-sbras.com/docs-regulamento-ccab1987.pdf

In fact, the bases on which this project rested – lack of properly trained staff, the nature of its ownership, the self-management model, low budget and the “collective essence” of the museum origins and collection – did not allow for analogies with more conventional models. Due to the intrinsic characteristics of the territory, the bond with the locals became indispensable, for reasons of mutual recognition to further enrich the museological assets, while also to expand the technical team based on the diversity of knowledge and local experiences, and the self-sustainability of the project.

Therefore, slowly but surely, throughout the years and following the natural evolution of these processes the *Ethnographic Museum of Algarve Costume* developed its own dynamics based on two central profoundly intertwined pillars: the collective construction of processes related to the life of the Museum (matching with life besides its own), and the definition of a central theme of study which allowed for the proximity of historical, geographical, social and cultural contexts of the region: the field of fashion and costume heritage (Sancho, o.c.).

Simultaneously, and in recognition of the work in progress, from 1994 onwards the museum would employ a second worker.

In the same way, and according to the politics of value for difference and diversity (Abreu, forthcoming) that had started to gain strength in the beginning of the century, but also aligned with the principles and methods of Social Museology, from 2006 onwards the Museum’s new name, *Costume Museum of São Brás de Alportel*, would come to reflect its local commitment.

On this basis, and under the patronage of the *Misericórdia*, MuT currently relies on a staff of three (1 director and two employees) who guarantee museological management, its daily opening to the public and the maintenance of its spaces. Educational services, inventory and management of technical reservations are in the hands of volunteers, or contracted personnel with experience, knowledge and possibilities of cooperating with the Museum (see the layer of the “Visible Museum”, Figure 11-1).

In this context, the Museum director is responsible for the museological management and organizes medium and long term initiatives, exhibitions and projects with the help of a group of different collaborators of varied fields of specialization.

The planning and putting together of new exhibitions, having the contents well defined and the selection and collection of objects based on collective work processes, falls within the scope and responsibility of the local enterprise *Museu à Medida*. Something similar is occurring in the area of Design and Communication, in charge of the young company *No traço*, whose economic viability depends on the services provided to MuT and mostly to the outside market. The *Cantinho do Museu*, the small Museum bar, functions through the collaborative concession to young entrepreneurs with interest in giving life to this part of the garden (see the layer of the “Integrating Museum”, Figure 10-1).

On the other hand, along with the exhibition and research project program (see the layer of the “Long term Museum”, Figure 10-1) MuT relies on a cultural and recreational agenda which is the responsibility of the *Friends of the Museum* who, as a result of their efforts and the value of their interaction with the institution, occupy a place of great visibility within the general structure. The *Friends* are a multicultural association of about 800 members, who are responsible for a vast sociocultural program, for the functioning of various autonomous groups in the fields of theatre, music, photography, fitness, history and handcrafts in addition to a multilingual library (see the layer of the “Day to day Museum”, Figure 10-1), and also for its

voluntary initiatives which are fundamental for the proper functioning of the inventory and heritage educational services.

Within this kind of structure, the many organizations which share museological spaces benefit from an autonomy based on individual responsibility, assuming the management, the mediation and the building of a working network.

The team, collaborators, volunteers, collectivities, organizations and users see MuT as a space for sharing, based on the development of sociocultural creativity and on the valuing of new uses of natural and cultural diversity characteristic of the region. The Museum sees itself as an experimental field for an alternative management model, which may represent a contribution to the social function of the community museums, but also as laboratory able to give a new meaning and a new scale to the concepts of heritage and heritagisation.

Recognized as the guardian of a collective past and present memory, and as the generator of plural dialogues committed to safeguarding diversity, MuT constructs itself as a Museum which is useful to the people, both in their daily lives, as well as in its relation with the local environment. In this process, and along with the ideological values which can be found at the basis of its creation and evolution (social solidarity and Social Museology), the key to its development seems to rest in the museological and cultural autonomy it succeeded in gaining.

Looking into the past, we now realize how the origins of MuT shaped its present form and content. But much more than its natural framing, its initial bond with the local communities has come to be a continual essential factor in its evolution, allowing for the achievement of a sociocultural level of maturity as we will be discussing next.

4. MuT: a day to day museum, from collective strength to shared knowledge

The encounter of a number of improbable conditions at MuT caused a peculiar development in the management model. Motivated by the freedom of action, by financial autonomy as a means to the sustainability of the Museum and as an example for the area where it is located, this museum today counts on high levels of participation and involvement of the population.

For the reasons above, it has become an interesting case study, especially from the point of view of new practices related to Social Museology, but also from the perspective of new models of social and cultural development structured from the base to the top.

Indeed, MuT functions as a platform for the encounter and recognition of knowledge and experience of life which nurtures the concept of sociocultural diversity in the Algarve interior.

In this sense, the management assumes postures and practices aiming at the development of a truly transversal model, based on the contemporary concept of the network, involving the intense exercise of the construction of the Museum as a space for empowerment of local populations.

Keeping all these aspects in mind and within a perspective which conforms the experimental character of this process, we can then ask ourselves about what characterizes the Museum of São Bras.

MuT satisfies most of the requirements to be classified as a Museum, both from the point of view of the parameters stipulated by the *Portuguese Museum Network* (RPM), as in the definitions and international norms defined by ICOM. However, this is not a Museum in the strict sense of the term, that is, it does not just deplete its mission in a neutral way, satisfying the

museological functions internationally defined, from a theme or a territorial framework. We are faced with a type of museum which is profoundly inspired on the principles and practices of Social Museology, which makes MuT the result of the progressive adaptation to natural and human geographies of place, with the purpose of becoming useful to local development.

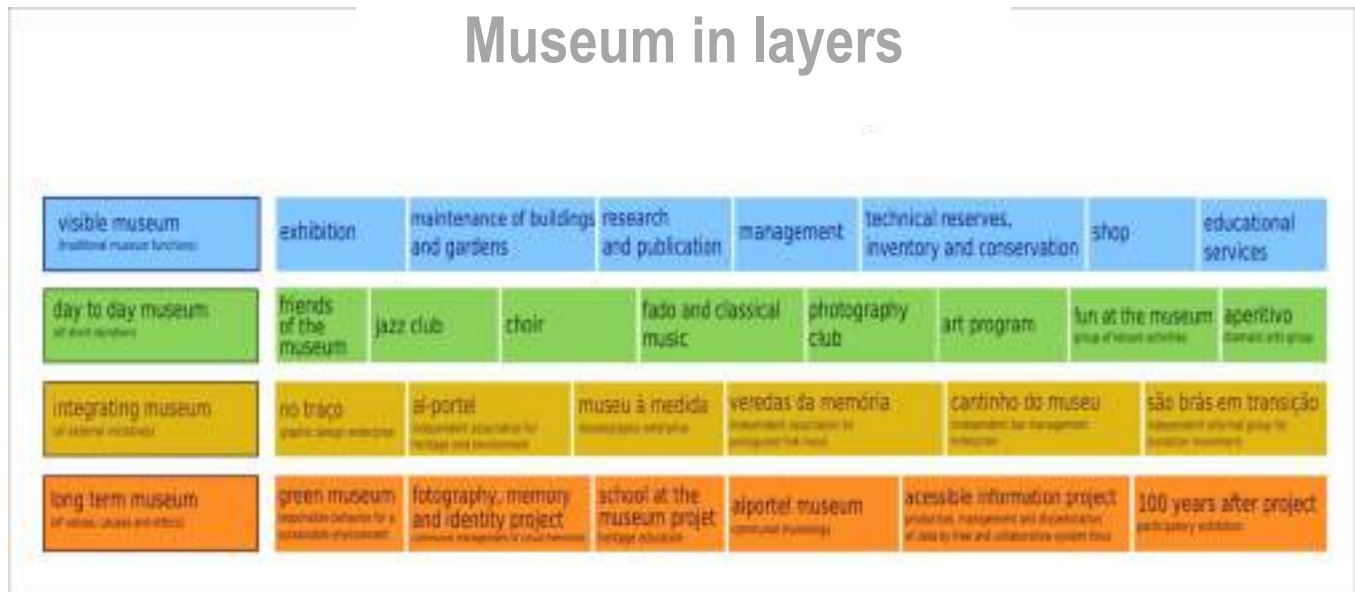


Figure 11-1: The cultural ecosystem of MuT seen through the layers of museological action.
(Authorship: Emanuel Sancho e Lorena Sancho Querol)

4.1. Systemizing the experience

So as to better understand the functioning of MuT, and above all the sociomuseological character of the project, we have created a table which allows us to approach each of the layers that are presently included in the Museum as it is today (**Figure 11-1**). Within it we have defined four levels of practice according to the type of social, cultural and territorial outreach, but also that of the objectives, of the agents and of the public that use it, so as to better explain the management model of our main character.

In this table, the **Visible Museum** takes as its starting point the museological practices which are today globally recognized as part of a Museum; there we find the dynamics related to exhibitions and catalogues, research and publication, the collections and the activities of heritage education. This layer is especially directed towards the visiting public, who are looking for more information on local culture and realities.

Yet at MuT we witness the co-existence of new skills and volunteer work, environmental and artistic projects, diverse forms, colors and intensities of utopia, and also the commitment of providing a new sustainable management of the resources related with the Museum and the territory in line with a broader and inclusive concept of culture.

The second layer of visibility, not of lesser importance, brings to life the **Day to Day Museum**. It is in this layer that the *Friends of the Museum*, thanks to the autonomy which they are given by the management and in a meaningful relation with the locals, provide training, information and socialization through the previously referred initiatives. The construction of this Day to Day

Museum demands presence, attention and permanent listening to the needs and aspirations of those who co-habit the land with the Museum. It demands “living with” the people, meaning, identifying synergies capable of accompanying rhythms, making the most of knowledge, time and spaces, in order to make the Museum useful to everyday life. This process has been translating itself into a growing affluence of public and users, through a diversified, daily use of spaces and, consequently, through the increasing revenue that results in a stable functioning of this organization, allowing for the creation of a new position: the Administrator of the Friends association.

Yet in this layer, and due to the characteristics of the activities it develops, it should be stressed that, according to the nature and participative intensity, the MuT establishes a difference between the public visitors, i.e. the people inhabiting, or not, the territory of the Museum, use it in an sporadic and distanced way, and the users, i.e. those people who attend regularly and with whom MuT establishes a lasting social and cultural interaction enriching for both parties (Victor, 2005). At a deeper level, which combines decreased outside visibility with a growing level of local utility, another museum emerges: one which integrates within its spaces long term projects, services, new businesses, ideas, dreams and local associations, taking on the role of an **Integrating Museum**.

Within this framework, MuT performs yet another social function: that of supporting people and organizations in pursuing its individual and collective objectives, constructing through proximity and complicity a collaborative community of individual interests, which complement each other and intersect on a daily basis. This interaction play allows for the consolidation of a sociocultural facet of a museological project through new collaboration, diversity of experiences, cultures and skills, the creation of innovative competences, in short, the social renovation based on the axis of local cultural development.

At last, we find the layer of the “substratum”, that is, the not so visible but still the most structuring in the construction of a long term sociomuseological equilibrium, whether for its ethical implications - in its economic, ecological, social and heritage perspectives – as for its capacity to make the museological project sustainable, contributing to the recognition of the role of the Museum within the scope of local development. What we are referring to, is the **Long term Museum**, a layer of MuT where we find the initiatives and projects which, in the long term, are allowing, among other things:

- To broaden the DNA heritage in the Algarve interior (Varine, 2012) with the participation of different local collectives, whose experiences and knowledge allow us to identify other forms of heritage community capital;
- To contribute to the recognition of a social experience and local culture, and to expand from here to the construction of a solidary and inclusive knowledge (Santos, 2009), capable of responding to the challenges of contemporary societies;
- To transmit, through heritage education, the active and structured safeguarding mechanisms taking from processes of action-research that privilege alterity, intergenerational and multicultural dialogue, starting from the school-museum axis.
- To establish principles and good practices of sustainable Museology from environmental and economic, social and cultural perspectives, allowing for the best use of local resources and the re-use of different capitals coproduced with the Museum.

Subjacent to this structure we find the foundations of an edifice that is the result of a constant effort in creating stability in the long term, in order to achieve the recognition as a space for self-determination and freedom, but also for sustainability in its most diverse forms.

4.2. On the construction of economic sustainability

Taking a different look at these layers of action, we propose to analyze the current experiences according to their economic maturity, in order to understand how this dimension of sustainable Museology, essential in present times, is being constructed. We then surveyed these four stages of maturity:

- in a first group we identify the components that reveal an intentional commercial objective and that, besides allowing for the creation of new work posts born out of cultural dynamics, they constitute regular sources of income at MuT: i.e the Shop and the Bar (more information at: www.museu-sbras.com/bar.html).
- in the second group we find the initiatives that have achieved full economic sustainability, that is, that generate funds equivalent to the spending for adequate functioning. It is, for example, exhibition activity versus the museographic activity, publications versus research, and also of the group of Friends of the Museum (see: <http://www.amigos-museu-sbras.org/>), who won their majority in 2007, when they passed to balance its revenue and expenditure (which includes the creation of the referred work post);
- the third group includes part-time job projects that comply with a plan of economic viability at medium term. These are funded, in the meantime, through other projects which have already achieved economic stability. Some examples are the initiatives of the *Museu à Medida*, (<http://museuamedida.yolasite.com/>) and *NoTraço*, *Graphic Design enterprise* (<http://museusbras.wix.com/design>);
- the fourth group includes museum departments which on their own do not generate enough revenue to be self-sustainable. It is necessary that the Museum itself produces additional funds to support their existence. Practical examples of these cases are the *Documentation Centre* (library management and archives) and the *Maintenance Service*. MuT continues searching for a suitable formula to acquire those funds.

5. Redefining concepts, practices and meanings in the museum

Following this line of action, and conscious of the importance of the construction of a Museology capable of associating social involvement with sustainability, the MuT rethinks itself around a question that seems vital to us: how to materialize, in practice, the interrelation between the four pillars of sustainable development and the three axes of practice that brought Social Museology to life, in order to define new logic and modes of action for the local museum.

From this perspective, and taking as a starting point the structure already presented in Figure 11-1, in order to gain a deeper understanding of some of the work at MuT, we have identified four experiences that seemingly respond to the challenge of constructing this sustainability, and that will be analyzed next:

Project *Photography, Memory and Identity* (FMId).

The FMId project was born in 2009 and established itself as an exercise in archeological memory about the municipality of São Brás. This project allowed the Museum to decode other segments of the local DNA heritage, among which are: traditional knowledge, history and local memory, balanced uses of local resources, new ways of alternative economy, of community organization, etc. In this process, the Museum assumes the role of mediator of the local population.

Objective: To work on the visual memory of the territory, from photographic archives of local families, with the aim of constructing a huge album of the community, capable of decoding cultural, social, rural and urban cartographies which have long been forgotten but are fundamental for the understanding/construction of a the present looking out into the future.

Methodology: organizing weekly meetings with a small group of local citizens with the right profile and interest in this process, to work on the decoding of submerged memories through family images, dating back to various periods and social segments of the region. These people assume the role of document gatherers or collectors together with the community, and actively participate in the technical work of inventory and documentation.

Results and products: along the chosen course and while giving voice to the working group, the Museum has gradually been assuming a discreet position, that of the facilitator and supplier of memories that are awakened through work. This project uses new information technology support platforms to facilitate the sharing of memories located within and outside the Museum, contributing to the constant enlargement of the project on different scales.

Simultaneously, a data base was created containing today around 30.000 images representing 400 local families of the municipality and surroundings. For this reason, Museum and community share the idea that together they have managed to create a “current account of memory” for each of the local families. In fact, the typology of the documentation integrated at the family processes have diversified, integrating also correspondence, legal documents, video and audio records, etc., in a very dynamic process that is close to the family changes, for example, births, marriages and deaths (more information at: www.museu-sbras.com/grupo-fotos.html).



Image 11-2:

Study of local identities and biographies at the “Escola Particular da Menina Sousinha” (Particular School of Miss Sousinha”) São Brás de Alportel.

Origin: Personal archive of Júlio Martins Negrão, (cousin and pupil of the teacher Sousinha).

Museum School Project (EMus).

The EMUS project was born in 2008 and aims to contribute to closer ties between Education and Culture on a global scale. The project connects the environmental, social and cultural dimension of sustainability. Within this context, it aims to develop complementary relations that exist between formal and non-formal education, bringing the School and Museum into closer contact in view of the creation of an educational heritage project aimed at the Portuguese primary school levels (6-10 years of age).

Considering as its priority the formation of new generations and the demystification of the elitist image that children and families have of museums, this project places MuT at the service of the school, facilitating the proceedings by eliminating barriers and bureaucracies, and allowing freedom of action to the teaching staff.

Objective: To develop close relations and tighter cooperation between School and Museum, stimulating work through a diversity of aspects and themes related with the local culture and territory. The construction of an affective and lasting relationship between the Museum, the children and their families, aims at:

1. Valuing the natural and cultural diversity of the region, country and planet;
2. Transmitting the values of citizenship and critical thought;
3. Developing new habits and cultural needs among families;
4. Inserting the Museum into the circle of spaces and common livelihoods of local families;
5. Redefining its areas of traditional heritage education through the creation of new fields of study;
6. Creating a Youth Group of *Friends of the Museum* (JoMus)

Methodology: By directing local schools located close to MuT, EMUS has in view the creation of an annual agenda of activities constructed between the professor and the Museum, based on the recognized needs of the school programs and on the characteristics of each class. In this way, for the duration of four academic years which represent the cycle, monthly activities on local heritage will take place.

Results and products: Identifying the proximity, constancy and assiduity as key factors in the process, EMUS has allowed, among other results, the following: the spreading/visibility of educational activities with the community and the Museum visitors, the raising of the quality of some school activities due to the technical intervention of the Museum, a greater involvement of families with events. At the same time, it has promoted educational processes, with free access to teachers, students and families to various MuT initiatives, and the use of some resources and museological assets in the school activities (more information at: <http://www.museu-sbras.com/escolamuseu.html>).



Image 11-3:

Activities of the project EMus.
(Author: Emanuel Sancho)

Participative Exhibition “A hundred years later” (CADe).

Crossing the economic, social and cultural dimensions of sustainability, CADe will be the next exhibition to be held at MuT, and will be inaugurated on November 2014.

Its provisional title being *A hundred years later*, this exhibition is a museological initiative to celebrate the centenary of the municipality of São Brás de Alportel (1914-2014). It is the second edition of a museographical experience which resulted in the current exhibition open to the public at MuT⁵. The new exhibition will rely on the same methodology as before but improving from the previous exhibition taking a step further.

Objective: to promote the participation of everyone, who because of the relation with the territory, history and culture, accepts the challenge and the museological right to cooperate in the design, management and materialization of exhibitions at MuT, encouraging network and defining new courses of action that lead to a participatory Museology.

Methodology: this type of participative exhibition takes as a starting point the creation of a working group integrated by the community and museum agents, and also the opening of an internet page where the museological initiative can be found, yet to be created and from which the whole process of conception and participative assembling of the exhibition is organized. Within this virtual space all the details of the process, planning, layout of the spaces, itineraries, selection of artifacts, research, work memo and agenda will be made available and permanently updated. Participation is made possible through the various forums are available on the web page.

5. *Algarve 19*, was a museological(graphical) shared experience organized in 2010 which led to the exhibition *Shadows of Light. Algarve in the 19th Century*. The webpage that served as a platform for its developments is still available at: www.algarve19.yolasite.com



Images 11-4 and 11-5: Some details of the last experiences of participatory exhibition.
(Author: Emanuel Sancho)

Results and products: These experiences stimulate the cooperation between a great diversity of people among which we find collectors, technicians or merely interested participants from all over the world. The previous experience revealed an important participation of immigrant groups who had left the region and settled around the world, making of this process a link to their place of origin. In this sense, it is worthy to highlight as strong points of this experience the transparency of the procedures regarding the organization of the exhibition, the profound level of sharing that defines the process and the incentive towards the collaborative model, (webpage of the current proceedings: www.museu-sbras.com/100anos.html).

Green Museum project (MuVe).

Of the projects here referred, MuVe could be considered the one that better intertwines the challenges linking Social Museology and sustainable development. In this experience we are able to verify the adoption of a set of good environmental practices that reveal relevant economic impacts in the management at MuT, and that raises awareness in the Museum and its community of the great environmental issues that currently affect our planet.

This project has totally altered the position of the Museum, namely in what concerns waste separation, use of low energy consumption equipment, production of compost, watering systems with treated waters, use of bicycles for short distance travel or the use of solar and wind powered energy. Besides that, the construction of a 10Kw photovoltaic station is now complete and awaiting licensing, guaranteeing the Museum energy self-sufficiency (more information at: <http://www.museu-sbras.com/museuverde.html>).



Images 11-6: Original building of MuT where MuVe Project becomes a reality.
(Author: Emanuel Sancho)

6. Final considerations

Our aim to demonstrate the challenges of a Museum in construction, has been achieved by associating to the notion of Museum the idea of process, and to the notion of construction the challenges that are common to other architectures, other heritages, and other causes that deserve our attention today, because they represent the foundations of the present changes.

To this end, we wanted to question the place (and the power) of the museum, within the meaning process of the "heritage" term, and to examine the building process of an equitable society, where culture, in its various shapes and sizes, has an essential role.

Working from within this encounter of senses and values, absences and presences, times and forms, with a small team and low budget, which is mostly the result of the initiatives and the creative use of local diversity, is for MuT a daily exercise that responds to the challenges of Social Museology committed to the cause of sustainability.

Social creativity, cultural sensibility and museological flexibility appear to be the keys to the process where, along with the experiences carried out, we also find initiatives that failed to attain a minimal stable structure, ending its life cycle before the desired time. We also learn to build the museum from these experiences.

Step by step we walk along the paths of a **M**useology that **U**nites and acts with **S**ocial conscience, that **E**mpowers worlds and local voices to give sense to the word **U**topia, in a country that finds in its diversity – cultural and natural – its greatest treasure.

With gratitude:

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List of Abbreviations

ICOM – International Council of Museums.

MUT – Costume Museum of São Brás de Alportel, Algarve, Portugal.

RPM – Portuguese Museum Network.

SCM – Santa Casa da Misericórdia.

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.